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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

JUDGMENTS OF MEANING IN ART[1]

MAY works of art have a meaning as one of their esthetic properties? Answers to this question whether affirmative or negative have driven many critics and estheticians into untenable positions, yet it is a question which requires an answer doing justice to the esthetic experience and harmonious with an acceptable philosophy of art.

The following study of meaning as an esthetic property begins with two explicit assumptions. The first concerns the definition of an esthetic judgment and the second concerns the methodology of esthetics. First, it is obvious that many kinds of judgments and many different predicates can be employed in estimating those objects generally considered to make up the field of the fine arts. It is equally clear, however, that many of these judgments and their predicates are irrelevant to that by virtue of which certain artifacts do so constitute the field of the arts. Those which are irrelevant relate the work of art to non-artistic material, i.e., to material not esthetically refined and presented in the same integral creation. A judgment that a picture costs a thousand dollars is such a judgment, which is about art but not an esthetic judgment. We may decide in general whether a particular judgment is genuinely esthetic by seeing if an affirmative answer can be given to the question, "Does tracing out the relation indicated by the judgment in question contribute to the direct and immediate sensory experience?" If it does not, if it dissipates the esthetic impact and corrodes its wholeness by diverting attention from the immediate givenness, it is not an esthetic judgment. This criterion is applicable within all esthetic theories which do not surrender the value of the esthetic experience to that of some other kind of experience, such as moral edification, for example.

Second, we have to presuppose the *prima facie* validity of judgments which claim to be esthetic and which meet the first requirement outlined above. In some fields of philosophy, and perhaps in all of them, it seems to me that the thinker should have a very

[1] This paper is based on one with the same title read to the Fullerton Club at Bryn Mawr College, December 11, 1943.

high respect for relatively naïve judgments. I do not propose that we always admire complete naïveté or accept the doctrine of the incorrigibility of common sense. I merely mean that before theoretical construction begins, the "facts" on which it is to be based must be accepted as such, even if only tentatively. In the appreciation of art, basic judgments of preference have to be accepted as evident even though they are only provisory, since dialectical and phenomenological elaborations may sharpen some distinctions and obliterate others; but if the expectation that they will stand analysis is not at least held—for it is obvious it will not always be fulfilled—no theory of esthetics can get started and even less can it be tested, for these judgments, though occurring in a value context, have the office and authority of fact. To be sure, even in the construction of a scientific experience facts are to some extent variable, and consequently to look upon values as facts does not of itself guarantee their permanence. Yet certain empirical judgments will retain their credentials in science regardless of what interpretations are put on them and no matter if they are translated into a conceptual language different from that of the prescientific judgment. At least the same primacy must be conceded to the basic deliverances of the esthetic attitude.

These two presuppositions provide a starting point and give direction to the following discussion. The "basic fact" of the esthetic experience with which we here begin can be expressed in such a judgment as, "The hundredth symphony of Haydn is very beautiful, but it lacks the meaning (or meaning-fulness) that one of Beethoven's later quartets has." Both inexperienced listeners and connoisseurs can be heard making such judgments as this. It is conceivable that their approval of the latter is misstated in this terminology, but we should not decide dogmatically in advance that this is the case. If an esthetic theory can not find a place for the predicate "meaningful" in its categories, or can not find a more acceptable way of expressing this preference, it is simply inadequate to the fact which it should explain. The place of meaning need not be the same after an analysis has been carried out as before, nor does it matter to our present purposes that artists and critics can not agree as to what has meaning and what lacks it. All that is asserted here is simply that some esthetic situations seem to demand the judgment that they have meaning, and this is a fact which should not be forgotten or simply explained away in the light of some *a priori* construction based on more convenient predicates.

The validity of the concept of meaning in art is most radically denied by those who follow the present enthusiastic developments

in semantics. With a positivistic definition of meaning, it is quite obvious that most art can not have any meaning. In sharply distinguishing between the emotive and the symbolical use of language or any communicative medium, and in restricting art to the former, they make it a gesture which is a symptom of emotions in the creator and a stimulus to emotion in the observer. The statements art makes are to them merely "pseudo-statements," and the difference between a yawn and a concerto is not that one has "meaning" or "beauty" but that it has a structure which is supposed peculiarly to adapt it to stimulation of certain desirable emotional states. But the "Ohs!" and "Ahs!" to which they reduce the lyrical gesture can not compete with the simple yawn as a stimulus in arousing (and even sometimes in calming and satisfying). Though the theory is in part correct in pointing to the fact that most art does not leave our feelings "cold," this fact is hardly sufficient to support the entire edifice of a philosophy of art which attempts to deal justly with the manifold complexity of phenomena in esthetics. It will suffice to indicate only three disadvantages which are closely related to the present problem. (1) It does not explain why a certain pattern of lines or tones (though the case is easier with words) is adequate to represent and to cause feelings; empathy can accomplish much, but how "meaning" supervenes upon the physiological empathic reaction is not revealed. (2) It does not adequately explain why two gestures which we may consider equally expressive and exciting may have such obvious differences in their *prima facie* esthetic value. If it attempts to do so, it must be in terms of kinds or real objects of the aroused emotion, and art is surrendered to all kinds of extraneous standards. (3) It directs attention away from the esthetic immediacy since there is no requirement that our emotional excursion entered upon because of the esthetic stimulus should bring us back to our point of origin with a richer experience of it.

Nevertheless, the attempt to escape these difficulties by a completely objective reading of the immediate experience does not lead us much further towards an understanding of meaning in art. The Kantian esthetic is typical of this, and though it preserved art from all sorts of Philistinism and subjective sentimentalism, it did so only by denying that art was a communicative medium. Its autonomy was preserved, but its content was dissipated in order to preserve its universality.

A third theory remains, and that is one which holds art to be communicative because it consists of signs of particulars. To prove this constituted the program of impressionism, but the instability of the impressionistic attitude can be discovered equally well by

reviewing its actual history or by examining its presupposition. The latter was the assumption that the artist pictures things as he sees them, that he sees them as they are and not as they have come to appear as a result of habit and practical interest, and that he then immediately represents them. Immediate representation, however, is self-contradictory, since representation implies mediation by perspective, selection, and accent. The fact that the artist has an arbitrary choice in each, not dictated by the material, is the fatal element in the program, because he can not humanly choose all of the possibilities in each and therefore has to make use of non-imitative canons. That is, he has to import into imitation an element foreign to his object and thus forbidden by his own theory. (Positivism had to do the same, and if a comparison between positivism and impressionism is appropriate, then their respective issuance later in voluntarisms and expressionisms of various sorts is no less revealing of their instability.)

But it is nevertheless true that much art has its imitative components, selected and modified by artistic demands. To trace out these indications, however, is like discerning that of which art is a symptom, in that both require us to leave the field of the esthetically given without any assurance of being brought back to it. On the other hand, to remain within it to the exclusion of all else seems to be, from the example of Kant, to deny the validity of the concept of meaning. Meaning by its very structure seems to entail a reference from the given here-and-now to the not-given. If this is all there is to it, we must suppose that our first presupposition is inconsistent with our second when applied to judgments of meaning.

But can we find meaning within the medium, not in a bridge between it and something else? We can not save meaning with a theory that the esthetically formed content both means and is meant in the same esthetic experience. Various forms of this theory of inherent meaning have indeed been valuable as defenses of esthetic immediacy against the theories we have examined which hunt for a meaning outside. But this theory involves an equivocation which lies in allowing the word "meaning" to denote both the act of reference and that which is referred to, and while acknowledging that it denotes both, it allows them to coalesce in one object or one moving process. How absurd it is can best be seen by analogy: if one claimed that a word had meaning, but when asked what was its meaning replied that it meant itself, we would quite rightly conclude that it meant nothing.

This analogy is not merely destructive, however, for if we observe the ways a word seems to have meaning and yet turns out

either not to have any or to have a different meaning from that which it seemed to have, I think we shall get some information which will help us to see how art can have a meaning without justifying the inadequate theories which we have already examined and rejected. The following account of the genesis of some communicative forms is not, of course, a genetic one; it does not purport to be a history of language so much as a gross anatomy of one or two of its parts.

In an ideally simple case, we would have a sound or a mark universally agreed upon for every discriminable entity. Such a "perfect language" would be absolutely transparent in both the objective and the intersubjective dimension. It would, however, be so complex that it would be unusable; its structure would be as complicated as the world itself, and for practical purposes we might be able to find no structure in it at all. Actual language has little or nothing in common with this ideal schema by which the semanticists wish to make the "verbal maps" fit the "geography of objects." One of the greatest differences lies in the fact that our language consists largely of class names, not proper names; a distinctive feature of class names is that they themselves form classes, and the whole apparatus of the calculus of classes gives the schematism of connotational structures. These patterns and the structural relationships among the things outside the medium are probably never isomorphous, and this has led many philosophers from Heracleitus to Bergson to regard language as deceptive. Certainly language can deceive us, but the knowledge that it can do so is useful for keeping it from actually doing so, and the deceptions which we fall into are occasions for restructuring either the connotational or the denotational patterns. Of the two, the former is the easier to change.

The ease of restructuring the connotational pattern in comparison with the difficulty of changing the objects to which the former is supposed to correspond is the source of two divergent modes of symbolistic change. The first begins with what we call "correcting" ideas in the light of experience. In this change, however, it is observed that the most valuable relationship for practice between the connotational and the denotational structures is not that of 1:1 congruence, but that it is rather a direct relationship between only a few terms of the one and a few observations of the other, with the terms themselves being connected into complex systems of relations which need not be supposed to hold in exact congruence in nature. The only requirement we make of a connotational structure is that it keep its feet on the ground, so that whenever a term which has a denotation occurs in the conno-

tational system, its factual counterpart can be found objectively in the denoted system under the conditions defined by the total connotational context. This status of meaning, which is the normal one in science, indicates that meaning can be preserved even when its elaboration goes on entirely within the symbolic medium and under the domination of its own logical, semantic, or mathematical laws. Its freedom from the vain ideal of perfect picturing of denotations can be called, for obvious reasons, "semantic dissociation," and its ultimate stage would be reached in a system of mathematics which would fit Mr. Russell's definition.

The other symbolistic change brought about by this greater plasticity of the connotational structure is what Friedrich Engels called "the innate casuistry of man, to change things by changing their names." This change may be called "semantic arrest." Here the footing of the connotational structure may be lost by inadvertence or intention so that the referential contact with the object is broken off. This occurs because, if we are careless, words and other symbols come to be regarded primarily as things and not as the meanings of things,[2] and sometimes because it is useful to us to talk without saying anything, as in phatic communication and delusory propaganda. Many of our words, names of values which Nietzsche said are merely "banners marking the spot where men have experienced new blessednesses," gain intersubjective currency but lose meaning in the dimension of denotation because they are names of ill-defined objects of desire which lie in a region all too far from that of practical enjoyment, thus building up substitute satisfactions in pseudo-environments of words and rituals and illusions. These symbols are freed from the corrective intercourse with their objects, and they become super-charged with meanings derived from their manifold uses as ideals and substitutes—that is, they become "overdetermined," as the psychoanalyst says—because they serve too great a variety of the intentions to do full justice to any; thus they lose their denotations and become useless or even dangerous when denotation is needed. But the visible structure of meaning is preserved, since the incongruence between the two realms is not visible in the single experience when we are looking at only one; its strength lies in its feigning a meaning.

[2] Though this account is not meant to be genetic, it is nevertheless well to point out that primitive language is at this stage and its development goes in the direction of a more stable denotative vocabulary and a connotational structure which is to a considerable degree semantically dissociated. This fact is relevant to the genesis of art if artistic communication depends upon the kind of arrest of the "normal" reference which is described here.

Semantic dissociation is more likely to occur when the elementary material which may have denotations is largely irrelevant to our emotional interests; semantic arrest occurs most readily when the material which may relate to an object or the object itself is strongly colored with emotions and interest. In the former case, the meaning may get through at selected points so long as a vocabulary of denotation is preserved; in the latter it may be peremptorily arrested because the denotations become completely indefinite, appearing only as incomplete acts of reference having direction (intention) but not specific termination. But in both, the appearance of meaning is preserved.

Now let us apply these distinctions to meaning as we find it claimed in some esthetic judgments. We have seen that though art may indicate an object and may let us discern the artist, this reference is not esthetic meaning. It has also been shown that we can not completely cut art off from all relationship to things outside it and still preserve the concept of meaning without equivocation. We have seen ways, however, in which the phenomenon of meaning can be preserved without there being any necessity other than a practical one (which is arbitrary for esthetics) for checking the precision of the reference, and the phenomenon is all that is needed in art. In a word, the question of the meaning of art is altogether different from (though perhaps basic to) that of its "truth."

It is my thesis that art has a meaning because its esthetically formed content is isomorphous with connotational structures which might be specified by contents which could have mediate meanings by virtue of the vocabulary-relations of the content to objects or non-esthetic ideas. Art which has a meaning is a sensuous presentation of connotations without denotations. If I may paraphrase Kant, art is "meaning without the meant."

Semantic dissociation will account for the significance of formal structure; semantic arrest comes into play when the contents of art are not just sounds and colors having sensuous relationships to each other, but when they are chosen from things we know in non-esthetic experience with which we normally associate them when we do not take up the esthetically detached attitude.

Absolute music and abstract painting have a meaning-structure but lack a vocabulary and thus have meaning but no denotation; representative and narrative art has a connotational structure and, through its use of situations which are not restricted to the artistic medium, it often has an apparently specific and, in many cases, a real denotation. But due to the centrality of quality in the esthetic experience, or to our psychic distance in neglecting non-esthetic implications, the content is allowed to become relatively opaque in

the denotative dimension. Thus it can be overdetermined for the spectator and can thereby gain in connotational richness (and intersubjective clarity) what it loses in having its denotation out of focus. I say it is "allowed" to become opaque, for it is obvious that it sometimes is prevented from this by our attempts to see through it to a denotation; my attitude to a novel, for example, can be that of a historian seeking information, and when it is I may both lose the esthetic immediacy and therewith any purely esthetic meaning it may have, and find that the non-esthetic or denotative meaning is in error and does not really lead me to things at all. But in the esthetic experience it has a meaning, and the fact that greater circumspection may show it to be denotatively delusory is irrelevant to the appreciation itself.

The meaning of a work of art, then, may lie in the contents which might in other circumstances be meaningful to us because of the denotations they have; but these salient meanings are arrested by the quality which will not let us go through it lightly. Ambiguity in it may be looked upon as a positive quality dependent upon overdetermination instead of being merely a name for lack of determinateness. Or meaning can lie in its form, which serves as a sensuous receptacle for many specific connotations but is not limited to one, being a sensuous schema or essence but not a discursive universal. The work of art can thus be the locus of the phenomenon of meaning without committing the artist to anything specific about the real world, moral or physical, subjective or objective; but the work of art is not isolationist for this reason, for it has the potentialities of an almost infinite number of references, no one of which it need specify because to specify means to deny other meanings. It is in this sense that even the non-verbal arts are more "philosophical" than history. This universality which transcends specificity of denotation also explains the paradox that we can both assert that a work of art has a meaning and yet deny in principle that we can enunciate its meaning. For any narration in a language makes specific denotative commitments which the artist has transcended; if it does not do so it is clear that it will necessarily remain the unclear and confusing outpourings which are accepted as "art appreciation" and which have no more specific meaning and considerably less interest than the art itself. It is not the fault of the interpreter, however; it lies in the nature of the task he has rashly assumed. We can at most tell what a great work of art does *not* mean; to express its full meaning would be to recreate the work (and critics are not too competent here). To attempt to express a phase of its meaning may be in part successful, for the form of the work will often fit many particulars; not

one program but an indefinite number can be found for a piece of music if one sets about the task with imagination; but to hold that the form is preëminently congruent with one particular narrative pattern which is specified by having a denotative vocabulary is to miss the esthetic meaning which is potentially a great variety of specific meanings which never should be allowed to become actual by denying the equal appropriateness of the others. Thus Beethoven's third symphony can not be exclusively interpreted as an elegy to a great man without our losing some of the richness of meaning its phenomenon suggests as possible; but at the same time it is obvious that it does not mean, even in this tenuous way, the situation suggested by his "Fury over a Lost Penny." When a definite program is provided, or when the structure is organized in such a way as to make it conform obviously to one particular denoted circumstance, we get program music with a denotative meaning, the interpretation of which leads us away from the medium and thus reduces the pure esthesis.

Although we can not say what a work of art does mean, we can nevertheless point out some of the conditions in a work of art which seem to call for the particular response of a judgment of meaningfulness. Both the form and the content must be considered. First, the form must exhibit a pattern which a directly communicative system could have. Regardless of the differences in content, the analogy between music and mathematics has long been obvious; they both have an abstract semiotic structure. They are characterized by a variety which almost breaks through the limits of the allowable heterogeneity (of ideas or contents), but are saved from disintegration by subtle harmonies and a synoptic integrating unity in complexity; they are marked by a simultaneous progressive development of both the apparent variety and actual and (at least eventually) obvious wholeness; they are marked by assertion if not denotation;[3] their contents are unambiguous (fitting) in their own contexts no matter how far they are from uniqueness of denotation; and finally they go through various phases of development in which there is both a progressive and retrogressive effect upon the connotations of all other parts.

[3] This distinction is made clear in Wheelwright's "Principle of Paradox: that two quasi-contradictory statements which lack full propositional assertibility may both be accepted as true, or both as false, within the same context." —Philip Wheelwright, "A Preface to Phenosemantics," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. II (1942), pp. 511–519, especially page 517. This entire essay, explaining the modifications in ordinary semantic canons required by their application to "transformal" or "meta-logical" contexts (of which art is one) can not be too highly recommended.

If we turn to the contents of those arts which seem to have a denotative meaning, it is even clearer how they can have a genuinely esthetic meaning. They have such a meaning to the extent that their vocabulary is overdetermined without semantic arrest causing the phenomenon of meaning to fade. Thus a photograph does not have the meaning that a painting of the same person can have, because its vocabulary of indicators of something outside it is too transparent to hold attention to itself. Or when photography reaches the status of art, it no longer lets the attention go through it to the object so directly that it can not enrich itself with a variety of connotations (and thus ceases to be "photographic" in the ordinary pejorative sense of the word). Something between the extremes of complete objective opacity and transparency is required; *Finnegan's Wake* does not have as much meaning (at least to many people) as *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* because in the former semantic arrest is so complete that the phenomenon of meaning is itself weakened and can be found, if at all, only in the form.

If we use "beauty" as the name of a specific esthetic category and not as a term of general esthetic approbation referring to perfection in all relevant values, it is clear that meaning can be a category of quality which may be distinguished, and though it is not independent of other esthetic qualities, it is nevertheless acceptable as a predicate in genuinely esthetic judgments. Not all esthetic objects have it; nor can it be said that the phenomenon of dissociated or arrested meaning is restricted to works of art. But works of art are preëminently receptive to it, for in creating the mood of immediate acceptance of the given and satisfaction with the phenomenon, we do not feel uneasy in view of the intrinsic ambiguity of the meanings adumbrated.

LEWIS WHITE BECK

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PLAY AS ART

DURING the last century and a half there has been a controversy among estheticians, sporadic, as are so many controversies in this field, as to the possible relation between art and play. That there might be such a relation was suggested by the fact that both are self-sufficient activities or are, at least, so characterized by their devotees: *ars gratia artis* and *pour le sport.* Not only Schiller and others with a particular interest in the problems of esthetics but also psychologists who have studied these two forms of

human conduct have assumed a close relationship between play and art. Other estheticians have denied from time to time that any such relationship exists. My interest in this paper is to consider some contemporary objections to the play theory of art. I shall try to show that these objections are invalid so far as they attempt to deny a close relationship between play and art, because they rest, as I believe they do, upon a misunderstanding as to the nature of play.

In her recent book, *Philosophy in a New Key*, Mrs. Langer says:

> Another item in human behavior is our serious attitude toward art. Genetic psychology usually regards art as a form of play, a luxury product of the mind. This is not only a scientific theory, it is a common-sense view; we *play an instrument*, we *act a play*. Yet like many common-sense doctrines, it is probably false. Great artists are rarely recruited from the leisure class, and it is only in careless speech that we denote music or tragedy as our "hobby"; we do not really class them with tennis or bridge. [P. 37.]

Since the question of careless speech has been raised, it might be well to point out that according to the dictionary definition of "hobby," as "something in which one takes absorbing interest," music and tragedy might well be regarded by many as a hobby. It is true, however, that in our ordinary use of the term music and tragedy as well as tennis and bridge are *not* commonly referred to as "hobbies." In general the term is used to describe such activities as carving ships in bottles and collecting stamps.

Mrs. Langer's contention, however, is clear. Art, she thinks, is regarded in a more serious light than play. It may be a bit invidious, but, I think, justified, to ask by whom it is so regarded. A perusal of most newspapers, and not only of those in America, might lead one to suppose that in the view of these interpreters of human interests not only is play a matter of serious interest on the part of human beings, but that the attitude toward play is one of more seriousness than the attitude toward art.

Part of the difficulty in interpreting this statement lies in the ambiguity of the word "serious." When we say that something is serious, we may mean that it lacks humor, is "long-faced." Or we may mean that it is useful in the more obvious sense. We may mean, again, that it is necessary in some way or other. Or, finally, we may mean that it is worthy of attention, that it has worth or value.

Let us see whether, interpreting the term in any of these ways, we can discover a differentia between play and art. Certainly Mrs. Langer does not mean that the attitude toward art is "long-faced"; nor can she mean that people regard art as having "bread-and-butter" value. It is true, of course, that there are profes-

sional artists. But there are also professional athletes; I suspect that these are better paid than the former. When she says that we have a "serious attitude toward art," Mrs. Langer must mean either that art is considered necessary for human life, whereas play is not so regarded, or that we recognize in art certain values which make it worthy of attention, while play is felt to have no such values.

Necessity in this connection can not refer to the possibility of physical survival. Art is not necessary for life in the same way that food is; people do manage to survive without art. So necessity in this case can only mean constant conjunction. On this interpretation it is hard to see how art could be called a more necessary aspect of human life than play; both have been characteristic of all human culture.

The difficulty with the final alternative is related to the foregoing. We can assume, I believe, that those activities which have constantly been conjoined with human culture have been felt by human beings to have some worth. Both play and art have been, then, regarded as somehow valuable by all human cultures. No basis of differentiation can be provided on this basis. The problem of the relative value of play and art is not being raised here, but only the problem of the type of value recognized in the two phenomena. The question to be asked would seem to be, not, Is one taken seriously and the other not? but rather, Why are they both taken seriously? and, Are they taken seriously for the same reason?

Mrs. Langer has this further to say about the seriousness of play:

> If men's minds were essentially playful, they could have no "uneasy conscience at their respite from work." Young dogs and young children, to whom play is a necessity, have no such conscience. Only people who feel that play displaces something more vital can disapprove of it; otherwise, if the bare necessities were taken care of, work in itself could command no respect, and we would play with all the freedom in the world, if practical work and sheer enjoyment were our only alternatives. [P. 158.]

This passage may be regarded in part as an attempt to give evidence that play is, after all, not taken seriously. If it were considered an important aspect of life, our consciences would not bother us when we played. However, this conscience of which Mrs. Langer speaks seems to be one conditioned by a particular atmosphere often—and without complete justice—identified with Puritanism. I would like to suggest that this same conscience, unless it had been tempered by other influences, would probably regard art as a waste of time, as displacing "something more vital."

In this latter quotation, as in the former, it is apparent that Mrs. Langer, while she objects to the view that art is a "luxury product of the mind," assumes that to be the correct explanation of play. It is true that it has been a popular interpretation, but one the accuracy of which may be open to doubt. A consideration of some of the explanations of play may be of some assistance in clearing up these difficulties.

I think that we may dispense with more than a brief mention of the teleological explanations of play. It is certainly true that play actually functions as a preparation for adult activities, as practice in self-control, particularly in muscular coördination and in following rules. Play does at times afford and can be used as an innocent release for possibly harmful impulses. But these certainly can not be taken as other than descriptions of the effects of play on children, or perhaps as justification for play, if such is needed. But, aside from the fact that adults as well as children play, and these explanations pretend to explain only the play of children, they are unsatisfactory, simply because they leave entirely unanswered the question, What is it that induces people to play?

The most popular of the non-teleological explanations of play, the one which Mrs. Langer apparently accepts, regards this phenomenon as an effect of the need to expend superfluous energy. This seems more promising. Many of the facts of experience give it support. A child who is forbidden to play for any reason becomes increasingly restive; we can sense the pent-up energy struggling for release. But on the other hand this statement is too negative. While it is certainly true that an individual does not play unless he has the energy to do so, it is also true that a child —or an adult—will often continue to play long after we have any reason to suppose that the pressure of some sort of energy reservoir should drive him to do so, indeed until he is "dead-tired." This fact would seem to suggest that there is a more positive value to play than simply a release of tension, something like an appreciation of activity itself. This enjoyment of sheer activity, especially noticeable in the young infant, is most promising as a definition of the play-interest. That it is not complete will, I hope, become apparent subsequently.

It might be well to mention also two attempts to explain play in terms of instincts: of imitation and of competition. These two are particularly unsatisfactory in view of the fact that both these factors, while undoubtedly present in some play, are by no means present in all play. There is non-imitative play, and there is non-competitive play. In both cases non-essential aspects of play have

been used as principles of explanation of the phenomenon itself. Art, too, has been in certain circumstances both competitive and imitative. Neither factor, however, can therefore be considered essential to art.

We can see, then, that only the attempt to explain play in terms of enjoyment of activity seems promising as a description of the interest which is satisfied in play. There is, however, as was previously mentioned, a certain inadequacy in this description. While it is true that in its earliest form, in the very young infant and in certain animals, play can be best described in these terms, very soon simple activity as a source of enjoyment becomes inadequate for the child. Play becomes game. There seems to develop an interest, not simply in activity, but in activity which has some form. This formal element grows more and more apparent as the child grows older and the form becomes more and more fixed and determinate. In the earliest games the form element is provided by the forms of activities which the child sees going on about it in its home; in its play it imitates the activities of parents or older children. As the scope of its experience becomes wider, there are more and more opportunities for variation of the form. The small child who bustles about in the home is "going to the store" or "getting supper ready"; the little boy who runs along the street uttering guttural sounds is "shooting Japs with a machine gun." The interest is not simply in the activity, but in the activity impressed with a certain form. Those who suppose that the child runs simply because he enjoys the activity of running have probably never bothered to ask a child to describe what he is doing. In most cases the answer, indicative of the interest the child has in the activity, will refer to some activity which his running is imitating, the form of which is the object of interest.

Besides the concrete, imitative form of these activities there is also the more abstract, non-imitative form of the game proper, the game with rules. In these games it is, of course, not simply the activity, but the activity with form, which is the object of interest. Otherwise the establishment of rules and observance of them would never take place. In these cases it is to be noticed that the kinds of play differ only in the source or the type of the form which the activity assumes; the play of the child, just as much as the game of the adult, is an activity which is satisfying in some way because of its form.

The interest in play, then, may most correctly be described as an esthetic rather than a kinesthetic one; the satisfaction derived is "intellectual" rather than physiological. This is not meant to deny the possibility of a close relation between kinesthetic and

esthetic interests and satisfactions, but simply to state that the interest in play is more like the interest of the composer of a musical work or of the musician who performs it than it is like the interest which we may have in a morning stretch or a brisk walk. This would point to the necessity of considering play as one of the particular expressions of the same interest which man finds, among other things, in artistic creation. The failure to appreciate this on the part of certain estheticians may lie in their failure to make a careful study of play activity.

What is presented here constitutes no more than a cursory survey of the subject. If a description of play in these terms is satisfactory, as I believe it to be, we can go on to consider whether we can give any further analysis of the interest in form as it applies to activities in play. Are we to regard form as a basic category in the catalogue of human interests, or can we give an analysis of this interest as well, showing at least its relation to other interests? I am still insisting that the interesting question in this regard is: Why is play taken seriously by human beings?

Let us consider, then, what the result of the introduction of form elements into activity in play is. The answer to this question may reveal the interests that are involved in this interest in form.

The primary result of the introduction of form elements is the simplification of activity. The rules or the limits imposed by imitation reduce the number of possible activities which are permissible within the game, or which, at any rate, are significant with regard to the game. Only a limited number of situations can possibly arise in the game; their character can be foreseen and the method of dealing with them can be decided upon in advance of their occurrence. In this matter, too, there is a simplification. The choice of means of dealing with a particular situation is regulated by the rules. As a result of this limitation the game experience is less complex than ordinary experience.

The decrease in complexity brings with it an increase in understandability. The important and unimportant, the significant and the insignificant, the essential and the non-essential, can be easily distinguished. What is going on is known to each participant. In so far as the participants follow the rules the reasons for each action are immediately apparent to the other participants. Again, the limitation makes it possible to see the remotest significant effect of each event. The ideal of perfect understanding is more nearly approached in the game experience, because of the limitations imposed, than it ever is in ordinary experience.

The limited "world" within the framework of the game is a more moral one, in the traditional sense, than that encountered outside the game. The identity of means and end in game activity obviates the possibility of paradoxes which involve the duality. The understanding of what is happening, what is to be done, and how it is to be done, seems to contribute to a greater feeling of individual responsibility. Chance is ruled out for the most part; each individual succeeds or fails as a result of his personal ability. Birth, appearance, or bank account do not help. This heightened feeling of responsibility is accompanied by, indeed is almost identical with, a sense of freedom. The real hindrance to freedom is not rules but chance; the rules of the game make possible the freedom within its framework.

It is because of the greater simplicity, rationality, and morality which characterize the game experience that play is recreation. It is here that we can see again the contrast between mere physical activity and play activity. Physical exercise, the type of the former, while it may induce a certain kinesthetic enjoyment, does not, in its net effect, go far beyond the muscles, the lungs, the circulatory system, and so on. Play activity, on the other hand, has as a result a restoration of what we may generally term a rational balance. It is true that, in so far as play is recreation, it is escape. It is an escape from the relative chaos of ordinary experience to a world where there is a rational and moral order, plainly visible and not simply the object of faith. The play experience is, then, like art, a clarification of experience.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Relational Value Meanings. BERTRAM EMIL JESSUP. (University of Oregon Monographs, Publications in Philosophy 1.) Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Press. 1943. 175 pp. $1.25.

Professor Jessup's study is one of the all too few sustained efforts that have been made to apply logical analysis to theory of value. When something of the sort has been attempted, it has usually been done myopically, by people who are more interested in developing—or displaying—their analytic skill than in illuminating the specific subject-matter of values. Although the declared aim of *Relational Value Meanings* is simply to discover the meaning of certain propositions about values, the author does not suffer

from what may be called analyst's cramp. He does not limit himself to the "clarification" of verbal expressions, but he goes on to propose and defend some definitions and assertions as not merely clear but also adequate to knowledge of the phenomena in question. In opposition to certain practitioners of analysis, furthermore, he starts from a concise but comprehensive critical survey of the recent literature of value, rather than from a few statements of philosophers chosen at random or maliciously.

Although some attention is given to rival theories, this study is devoted chiefly to reformulating the approach to values that is "relational," in the sense that it conceives value to occur "only in a relational situation, a situation including at least two terms and a relation between them"; and "subjective," in the sense that the constitutive relation consists in "some act, state, disposition, or attitude of a subject to an object."

According to Mr. Jessup, two distinct relations are involved in the value situation, "x values y" and "y is valuable to x." The distinctness of the two relations is shown in the fact that the converse of the first is not the second, but "y is valued by x." "Values" is the primary relation, and "is valuable to" is held to be derivative from this and dependent upon it.

Within a relational theory so defined, one of the commonest confusions springs from faulty logical analysis. The moot question whether value is a state of the subject or a property of the object poses false alternatives. Although Mr. Jessup does not put it exactly in this way, the purport of his position is that such a manner of stating the problem errs by carrying certain linguistic habits fostered by the subject-predicate logic over into a relational analysis. If value is actually constituted by a relation, then it can not be "predicated" simply of either term of the relation. Value may be conceived both as a state or attitude of the subject in reference to an object, and as a relational property of an object, namely, a property that it possesses for a subject. These two aspects of the value relation are complementary and in no way mutually exclusive. This does not imply, however, that we should speak of value broadly as a quality of the "whole situation," as Dewey and Alexander do at times. Such a view, Mr. Jessup points out, precludes a more precise specification of the status of the value within the situation, and it would involve symbolizing the value assertion not as simply xRy, but as $(xRy)_v$, an assertion of a different logical type, describing not the "primary" value situation in which a subject prizes an object, but a more complicated situation in which the subject prizes his own act of prizing, which in turn has become a new object.

The most original and most important section of the book is the long chapter entitled "Subjectivity in Subjective Theory of Value," in which the author tries to define more narrowly the act of the subject which constitutes the value relation. Most subjective theories profess to treat valuing as a "motor-affective" phenomenon, that is, as one constituted by both desire and feeling. Yet in the working out of these theories their proponents tend to reduce primary value to one or the other of these factors: e.g., Perry to conation, Prall to feeling. Mr. Jessup's statement of the problem here, together with his criticism of current treatments of it, is perhaps the most acute contribution of his study. Yet, this reviewer feels, he is less successful in resolving the problem and ends in a rather weak compromise.

On the positive side, the professed aim of this section is to develop a genuinely motor-affective theory of value, one which will treat the conative and the affective as distinguishable yet "coimplicative or correlative" aspects of the value relation, and not merely as "alternative forms or species" of it. Mr. Jessup also seeks to establish a closer relation between desire and feeling than is envisaged by those writers who conceive them as successive phases of a temporal sequence. Yet his intricate elaboration of the problem does not lead him to a clear-cut formal definition of "primary" or "immediate" value. Instead, we have the somewhat dogmatically maintained assertion that "we always actually like what we desire, and also always actually want what we enjoy," which leads not to a generic definition of value in terms of both desire and feeling, but to a fourfold classification of types of experience of primary value into experience of positive absent goods, of negative absent goods (evils), of positive present goods, and of negative present goods. The description of each of these, indeed, includes references to both conation and feeling: for example, in the experience of positive absent goods "the desiring element is one of wanting the absent good to be present," and "the affective state is one either of felt unpleasantness in the perceived absence of the desired object, or of felt pleasantness in the anticipated presence of the absent good, or perhaps a mingling of both." Now this is an accurate enough description of our attitude when we desire an absent object which, at the phase of anticipation, we *believe* to be good, or respond to as though we explicitly believed it to be good. But it does not achieve what Mr. Jessup set out to accomplish, and what a thoroughgoing logical analysis should accomplish. For it is to be noted, (1) that if this is taken as a definition of positive absent goods, Mr. Jessup has indeed avoided treating desire and feeling as alternative species of the value relation, but he has set

up an alternative within the affective component itself; and (2) that he has not supplied the single criterion he has sought for determining the genus of which these four types of experience are species.

The genus of which he is in search is "primary" or "immediate" value, which seems to be in the main what others refer to as "consummatory" or "intrinsic" value. The inclusion of absent goods among immediate values is both so unusual as to require special discussion (which it does not receive), and, for the purpose of obtaining precise definitions of value concepts, a fatal complication of the problem. For we do make an important distinction between cases in which the desire for an absent object is well founded and those in which it is ill founded. The anticipation may be justified by the event of immediate value or it may be disappointed by the actual relational properties of the object that are experienced when it is attained. It would seem to be better linguistic usage, and also contributory to a distinction of great practical significance, to reserve the term "immediate" value for the consummatory phase or properties of the act. (In the special case where the desire is toned by "felt pleasantness" rather than by "felt unpleasantness" it of course contains some measure of immediate value by foretaste.)

If we take the liberty of restricting the term in this way, we can get an implied definition of immediate value from the third of Mr. Jessup's four types of value experience, namely, experience of positive present goods. His treatment of this is summed up in the statement that "felt enjoyment is itself complete proof of felt desire, of a felt want being satisfied." The implied definition, then, is: That which has positive immediate value is that which is both enjoyed and desired. Such a conception presupposes a broader meaning of desire or want than is usually employed in conative theories. It does not, for example, restrict desire, as does Perry's conception of "interest," to those cases in which there is a specific expectation of the object. Mr. Jessup's purpose in using the term so broadly is to include in conations not only preëxisting desires or goal-seeking behavior, but also unforeseen desire-enjoyments such as the stock cases in which one comes by accident to hear agreeable music, or candy is popped into a child's mouth. In such cases "the desire is aroused by the same [stimulus] which satisfies it, and the desire and satisfaction occur in the same instant of time."

To define positive immediate value by two differentiae, enjoyment and desire, not only violates the principle of economy in definition, but also gives equal status to two terms which, by Mr. Jessup's own analysis, are not coördinate. If we always desire

what we enjoy, then it is redundant to include desire in the definition. And, as Mr. Jessup's own analysis of experience of "positive absent goods" shows, desire need not always be accompanied by enjoyment, since the affective state may be the alternative one of "felt unpleasantness in the absence of the desired object." In other words, enjoyment implies desire but desire does not imply enjoyment. It would seem, then, that Mr. Jessup's position would be clearer and more consistent if he defined immediate value in terms of enjoyment alone. That we desire what we enjoy would then be a corollary following from the definition of desire, and not a part of the definition of immediate value itself. This revision of his definition, then, is in no way incompatible with his view that "*some* affective state is always present with *some* attitude of desire, and *vice versa.*" But it does invalidate his criticism of affective theories of value, since he has not shown that a reference to conation is essential to a definition of immediate value.[1]

Some of Mr. Jessup's difficulties spring from ignoring the question of tense, and it is to be doubted whether the logical form of value propositions can be stated accurately without explicit inclusion of a temporal variable. Desire for an absent or future object involves an expectation or prediction, and the truth or falsity of the judgment of immediate value which is based upon such a desire depends on the fulfillment of the prediction.

A related inadequacy of Mr. Jessup's approach is to be found in his ignoring of modality and conditionality in value judgments. Thus in his rather scanty treatment of the relation "is valuable to," in distinction from the relation "values," he admits as legitimate meanings "is valued or has been valued," and "is conducive to or causally effective of things valued," while rejecting the meaning "is capable of being valued," on the ground that the concept of potentiality "admits value discriminations only after the fact." Not only would this rule out as meaningless all judgments which predict the occurrence of value properties—for all prediction occurs by definition before the fact predicted—but it ignores the specific properties of various objects, such as their chemical composition, which fit them to play different rôles in the value relation in accordance with such properties, depending on the organism's capacity to understand and make use of them. Here the properties

[1] Not only conation but other factors as well are involved in a full description of immediate value. In "Quality and Value," this JOURNAL, Vol. XL (1943), pp. 337–348, I have tried to show that the perceptual factor is of equal importance, and that two of the principal species of immediate value are differentiated by the predominance of the conative and the perceptual respectively.

of the object which are not as such valuational properties nevertheless determine whether it can acquire valuational properties. Such considerations would require modification of the colorless rôle assigned to the object of value by such assertions as: ". . . the object's part in the situation is simply that of being an object. That is to say, anything whatsoever, and its opposite equally, may or may not be an object of value, positive or negative." Though such an attribution of neutrality to the object may hold in a very general sense—namely, that there may be *some* circumstances under which any given object may be good or bad for *some* subject—it does not hold with respect to particular valuational situations, involving a particular time and a specific set of conditions. It is rash to assert that there is any product of Tin Pan Alley so trite that it will not be enjoyed by some one, but we feel safe in predicting that a given opus will not be found valuable by certain connoisseurs of music.

This shortcoming of Mr. Jessup's analysis is connected with his almost complete neglect of "extrinsic" or "instrumental" value. He treats as cases of immediate value certain situations which involve consideration of means, conditions, and consequences. Thus in answer to the question, Why should a man not lie? the answer is: "Because his name is Bill Jones, and Bill Jones does not lie." For "Bill Jones, if he is a person we approve of, has as a private possession a conscience rich and sober with the sentiments, attitudes, and traditions which we as other members of the same moral society also possess. And, if another Bill Jones with a too-different conscience appears among us, we call him Ishmael and pack him off with bread and a bottle of water into the wilderness, and rightly so because his value does not determine our goods."

To treat such a complicated moral phenomenon as conscience or the proscription of lying as a matter to be settled wholly by an immediate motor-affective response brings with it all the contradictions that have been pointed out in the "vicious" types of subjectivism and relativism, individual and social, those which lead to that very valuational scepticism which Mr. Jessup is trying to avoid. It deprives us of a public standard not only with respect to immediate preferences—where there is none—but also with respect to those aspects of the value situation which are subject to public verification.

Such an approach commits Mr. Jessup to a view of "standard" or "comparative" value which introduces no new factors besides those operative in the case of immediate value. "The standard is some felt good for the sake of which one foregoes some other felt good. . . . The valuing consciousness in evincing preferences con-

stitutes standards in quite the same self-sufficient way that it constitutes primary values." Now one can admit that a part of the quest for standards consists in the non-calculating comparison of affective tones, while denying that standards are achieved wholly in this way. Mr. Jessup's view ignores the scientific knowledge of the physical world, of man and of society, and the analysis of particular consequences based upon such knowledge, which goes into the rational quest for standards. In this connection it is significant that he can find no meaning in Perry's criterion of "correctness" or in his distinction between the "interest judgment" and the "judgment of value," and that he omits in his treatment of Dewey the one-sided but by no means negligible emphasis of the latter on knowledge of "public conditions" in the determination of standards. If such theories as Perry's and Dewey's fail to give a tenable view of immediate value, Mr. Jessup's type of subjectivism —which in essentials goes back to Hume, to carry it no further— shows itself wholly capricious in the determination of those principles which are required to organize the manifold ingredients of our ultimate standards and ideals.

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The Expression of Personality: Experimental Depth Psychology. WERNER WOLFF. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1943. xiv + 334 pp.

What the author terms "experimental depth psychology" is an interesting attempt to bring into harmony the concepts of psychoanalysis and the techniques of experimental psychology by establishing "a scientific basis for the exploration of personality" (p. 260). In the experiments here reported, the categories of Gestalt psychology play a mediating rôle.

Wolff's basic hypothesis is that a subject's "personality" is objectively knowable through, and his general behavior predictable from, his "forms of expression." The forms of expression considered are hands, face, profile, voice, gait, handwriting, free associations, omissions in retelling a story. The highly controversial character of this hypothesis (especially as regards character-reading from face and handwriting), the ingenuity of many of the experiments, and the inclusion of many photographs of material employed, lend considerable interest to the book. The chief experimental findings are three theorems which are taken to confirm the hypothesis: (1) Judgments of personality traits from these forms of expression correlate positively with observations of the person's everyday behavior; (2) Judgments of personality traits from one form

of expression (e.g., handwriting) correlate positively with judgments from another (e.g., voice or profile); (3) Judgments by others correlate positively with the subject's "unconscious self-judgments." These were obtained by some original experiments in which the subject was confronted with his own forms of expression (recording of voice, photograph of handwriting, moving picture of gait, etc.); the surprising findings were (*a*) that in the majority of cases recognition did not occur, and (*b*) that the unconscious self-judgments tended to have a marked affective tone, more frequently positive than negative.

Though a considerable section is devoted to unconscious self-judgments, the connection between these experiments and the hypothesis is nowhere adequately clarified, and the equivocation involved may be of some interest to the student of scientific method. It is not clear whether the subject's unconscious self-judgments are to be taken as the standard for the validity of judgments by the subject's acquaintances, or whether the validity of the self-judgments is to be determined by reference to the judgments of others (see pp. 12–13, 295). Moreover, in many cases the standard for determining the "real" personality, against which the experimental judgments are measured, appears, from casual references, to be the author's "personal experience" (p. 31) and "daily life observations" (p. 12; see also pp. 34, 86, 251, 294). But no attempt is made to analyze or justify this loose standard. And in view of its importance to the inquiry, it is astonishing that Wolff implicitly condemns it by quoting with approval P. E. Vernon's reference to "haphazard and unscientific methods, such as everyday observation" (p. 260).

Several investigators have reported contrary results from experiments with character-analysis of handwriting and physiognomy. Their results, according to Wolff, are due to four mistakes: (1) employing an arbitrarily sharp dichotomy of "right" and "wrong"; (2) emphasizing particular elements of the forms of expression and trying to correlate them with specific traits, rather than attending to the "structure" of elements and traits; (3) defining the descriptive terms too carelessly; and (4) using either "untrained" or "over-analytical" subjects (pp. 7–11, 113–114, 240–241).

The weaknesses of Wolff's own investigation are not easy to isolate, for his book is badly organized, and many of his most crucial assumptions either remain half-implicit or appear in digressions from the description of experimental details. But from the methodological standpoint there are certain difficulties that ought to be mentioned. In accounting for his own substantial minority of

cases where there was disageement about what personality-trait is expressed by a given form of expression Wolff insists that these may be only apparent, because (1) "a single form of expression may reveal different traits of personality" (p. 258), (2) disagreements in words do not necessarily mean disagreements in ideas, and (3) the subject may have "contradictory" traits (p. 259). Separately considered and cautiously applied, these assumptions have justification and need not necessarily vitiate the inquiry. But in some of his experiments (e.g., chs. 9, 13, 14) it seems to us that the author relies so heavily upon these excuses, and takes such full advantage of the tremendous ambiguity of personality-descriptions (on pp. 47–48, "healthy skepticism," "giddy," and "housewife" appear as personality "summarizing terms"), that even his apparent awareness of these pitfalls does not suffice to make his conclusions convincing. For in the experiments which are not open to this criticism, the number of instances adduced is too small to make the statistical correlations very significant.

There is one other point, which has a certain epistemological interest. The question arises: precisely what is the unanalyzed relation of "expression"; that is, what sort of knowledge is involved in perceiving that two forms of expression (e.g., hands and handwriting) express the same personality, and in inferring personality-traits from a form of expression? Wolff makes a distinction between these two types of observation: (1) "Matching skill," he says (p. 33), "seems to be related not to intellectual processes of rigid inference but to intuitive processes"; (2) while interpretation of a form of expression involves "intellectual deliberations." The term "intuition" is not defined, or even critically discussed, and there is no attempt to say just what sort of inductive inference is intended by "intellectual deliberations." And this omission constitutes a serious fault, we believe. In his chapter (ch. 13) on the "characterological significance" of association-chains, that which he is presumably to prove is assumed throughout, namely, that personality may be known from the type of association-chain. For instance (p. 230), he says that in the case of a subject whose associations were taken from literature and the drama, "this tendency points toward theatrical rather than genuine behavior." This sounds plausible, but has it any scientific significance at all? There is no indication whatever that Wolff has correlated a large number of such association-chains with a large number of "theatrical" personalities (and, more misleadingly, there is no indication that the two examples he gives of such an association-chain are from the same person); how then does he know that one "points toward" the other? There is no attempt to answer

this question, because there is no awareness of the necessity for inquiring what would be required in order to verify such a statement.

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BOOK NOTES

The Beginning and End of the World. EDMUND TAYLOR WHITTAKER. Delivered before the University of Durham at King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne, February, 1942. (Riddell Memorial Lectures, Fourteenth Series.) London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press. New York: Oxford University Press. 1942. 64 pp. $.85.

Professor Whittaker is a distinguished mathematical physicist, and in these three lectures he gives a simple and readable account of recent cosmological speculations in physics. He describes the present status of various conservation principles in physics, the implications of the principle of degradation of energy, and the content of recent theories concerning the evolution of the stars. He concludes that present evidence—admittedly fragmentary and inconclusive—compels assent to the view that there must have been a Creation of the universe, though science is incompetent to explain it. The lectures are avowedly apologetic for Christian theological dogma. Indeed, Professor Whittaker maintains that "the doctrines of the Church are not vague or doubtful, as compared with the results of science, and the confidence is not less secure"; although it is not clear whether "the results of science" here contemplated are the highly tentative cosmological speculations of recent astrophysics, or the solidly established findings of the sciences in other domains. In any event, his argument is a curious one. On the one hand, he accepts the scholastic distinction between physical theories which merely "save the appearances," and theories which deal with "essential and real existence"; he comments with sympathy on Ampère's dictum that "the substance of things is unknowable," and maintains that the various "mechanical" theories developed during the nineteenth century are theories of the first kind. On the other hand, although the recent findings of mathematical physics are established by the same logical methods as those of the nineteenth century, he does not hesitate to accept the former as significant evidence for the theological dogmas he wishes to affirm. Professor Whittaker's argument has a force certainly as great as the demonstration of God's existence which Euler is alleged to have constructed for Diderot's benefit.

E. N.

The Philosophy of Being. HENRI RENARD, S. J. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co. 1943. viii + 256 pp. $2.50.

This is another of the long series of textbooks in metaphysics which have been published in recent years for philosophical courses in Catholic colleges and universities. The form, and most of the content, is invariant, following the tradition of scholastic compends of metaphysics originated by the Arab Avicenna, and introduced into European schools in the sixteenth century. Like its predecessors, the book is in five parts, dealing respectively with Act and Potency, Being, the Causes, the Transcendentals, and the Predicaments, each section with its traditional subdivision of topics. Each topic is formulated as a thesis, followed by proofs, and sometimes ornamented with scholia.

The present reviewer is struck by two paradoxes. One is sufficiently expressed in the author's preface, as follows (p. 3): "They [the students] must first come to the study of reality with an open and unbiased mind; they must see how Thomas approaches and solves the fundamental problems of philosophy." The second paradox is that this textbook does not follow the path of Thomas in approaching the problems of philosophy, at least as far as method and order are concerned, but uses the very different approach established by Avicenna's *Metaphysica* and the sequence of scholastic manuals based on it. Even though the Avicennian framework is filled with quotations from St. Thomas, its deductive and *a priori* order and method can not but distort the character and method of the philosophy of Aquinas. After all, the works of St. Thomas were written by him as textbooks for students of philosophy and theology; it does not seem that he was incapable of judging how best to guide students in their approach to the problems of philosophy, especially when he himself had Avicenna's book before him, to be imitated or rejected as a model.

E. A. M.

La Réincarnation des esprits. PAUL SIWEK, S. J. (Bibliothèque française de Philosophie.) Rio de Janeiro: Desclée, de Brouwer & Cie. 1942. 241 pp.

While simple in form, and highly readable, this is a competent and comprehensive study of the theory of reincarnation, based on first-hand research whose results were previously set forth by the author in two works published in Poland in 1935 and 1937. The present book is in four main parts, dealing respectively with the historical, moral, philosophical, and psychological arguments for reincarnationism. Father Siwek brings to his study of each aspect

a wealth of information and understanding, developing his own criticisms and evaluations of the arguments in a fair and for the most part convincing manner. Those who find in the reincarnation theory an easy answer to the problems of human moral responsibility and destiny would do well to give careful consideration to this simple but solid study of the subject.

E. A. M.

Le Problème du mal. PAUL SIWEK, S. J. (Bibliothèque française de Philosophie.) Rio de Janeiro: Desclée, de Brouwer et Cie. 1942. 155 pp.

In times like the present a readable discussion of the ageless problem of evil should be welcome to many, however much it may be criticized by a few. Father Siwek's book is apparently intended for the many rather than for the few, not pretending to contribute anything new to the problem, but aiming to present its main aspects in their traditional content, in a simple and comprehensive form. The first two-thirds of the book seek to give precision to the term "evil," and to distinguish its various senses. The last part is a theodicy, with brief expositions and criticisms of the treatment of the problem of evil by Aristotle, by the Manichaeans, by monistic or pantheist systems, and by Renouvier, leading up to a statement of the traditional Catholic position that the possibility of moral evil is a necessary concomitant of the gift of moral freedom. It is fully admitted, however, that this is not so much a solution of the problem as a clue to its nature, since in its full cosmic implications the problem of evil is, and for mortal man must remain, a mystery only half understood.

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OTHER NEW BOOKS AND JOURNALS

Fike, Linus R.: No Nation Alone. A Plan for Organized Peace. New York: Philosophical Library. 1943. 96 pp.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW. Vol. LIII, No. 2. A Defense of Human Equality: *Herbert Spiegelberg.* The Strength and Weakness of the Pacifist Position as Seen by American Philosophers: *G. W. Hartmann.* Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association 1943. Discussion—Imperative Sentences in Relation to Indicatives: *Elizabeth L. Beardsley.* The Principles of Inclusiveness and Harmony in Perry's Theory of Value: *Sidney Zink.* The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine: *Anton-Hermann Chroust.*

THE PERSONALIST. Spring, 1944. Personalism in Scientific In-

terpretation: *Ralph Tyler Flewelling.* Personalism in Philosophical Meditation: *H. L. Searles.* Is Loyalty Enough? *P. E. Johnson.* Teacher and Critic, Know Thyself: *Gerard Hinrichs.* Re-Thinking of St. Francis of Assisi: *D. W. Soper.* Faust's Goethe and Hegel: *Gustav Mueller.* The Music of Personality: *Dane Rudhyar.*

We have received the following reprints:

"On the Concept of Culture and Some Cultural Fallacies" by David Bidney, from *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 46 (1944), pp. 30–44.

"John Dewey: Philosopher of the Possible" by Harry Slochower, from *The Sewanee Review,* Winter, 1944.

"Outline of an Empiricist Philosophy of Physics" by Gustav Bergmann, from *American Journal of Physics,* Vol. 11 (1943), pp. 248–258, 335–342.

"The Coleridges, Dr. Prati, and Vico" by M. H. Fisch, from *Modern Philology,* Vol. XLI (1943), pp. 111–122.

NOTES AND NEWS

Bryn Mawr College announces the second of a series of lectures on neglected aspects of Oriental Civilization to be given by Thomas Yahkub on April 10, 12, 17, and 20, 1944. His lectures will deal with the Main Currents in Indian Philosophy, Landmarks of Indian Religious Thought, The Web of Life in India, and Indian Art.